

on this bill but on this issue for pretty close to a decade, and it is long overdue.

You know, we have been working in a very bipartisan way on numerous subjects, including the competition bill that just passed, but it appears there are real limits to bipartisanship here in the Senate.

We are about to vote just to start debate—just to start debate on a bill that is very simple—provide equal pay for women. It is a modest proposal to address a real problem in our economy.

Women with the same jobs and same qualifications as their male colleagues often make less money. It is too hard for too many women to overcome that pay discrimination. This makes it easier for women to achieve pay parity, and like the previous bill, will help unleash strong economic forces to help America go forward because when women are not getting the pay they deserve, it impedes our whole economy and all of the human resources that we need.

Every Senate Democrat is ready to start debate on the Paycheck Fairness Act, but Senate Republicans seem to be mounting another partisan filibuster against this bill.

It is ridiculous that Senate Republicans will not even allow the Senate to debate a straightforward piece of legislation to help provide equal pay for working women in America, just like it was ridiculous for the Republican minority to filibuster bipartisan legislation to create an independent Commission on January 6.

Americans expect their government to make progress to improve our country, but Senate Republicans once again seem to be choosing obstruction.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 46, H.R. 7, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Maria Cantwell, Bernard Sanders, John Hickenlooper, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Amy Klobuchar, Thomas R. Carper, Mazie Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to

proceed to H.R. 7, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 227 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Kaine	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schatz
Booker	King	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cantwell	Leahy	Sinema
Cardin	Lujan	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	
Hickenlooper	Reed	

NAYS—50

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—1

Gillibrand

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 50.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, for over a year now, people worldwide have experienced immeasurable pain, suffering, and loss. This pandemic has tested each and every one of us in ways that we didn't know possible.

But perhaps no one has been more tested than our Nation's frontline, essential healthcare workers. They, like so many other frontline workers, did not have the option to telework, to socially distance, to remain in their homes, with their families, while the coronavirus ravaged our communities—no, just the opposite. They showed up more than ever before.

Not only did our Nation's doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals put their own health concerns aside to treat COVID patients, they continued to see all their other patients who couldn't afford to delay treatment, the heart attack and stroke victims, the chemotherapy and dialysis patients, the pregnant moms and new babies, people who had been involved in car accidents or were victims of gun violence.

When the rest of the world was being encouraged to stay home and avoid interactions with people, our medical providers continued to report to hospitals, community health centers, doctor's offices. They did so even when they weren't provided the proper personal protective equipment. They did so even when it meant that they had to quarantine from their own families. They did so even when it meant extra shifts on little to no sleep. They did so even when it meant spending each day watching dying patients say their final goodbyes to loved ones over Zoom. And they did so even when, in the midst of all of this, they were subjected to racism, sexism, and hate.

An essay that appeared in the New York Times last month detailed one doctor's experience. Dr. Chaya Bhuvaneswar—a female, Asian-American, Boston-area physician—recalled an incident last April, when a patient spit on her and said she “brought the sickness.”

Anti-Asian bigotry is, sadly, nothing new in this country, and the rise of it during COVID was certainly fueled by our former President, who seemed to delight in coining hateful, racist terminology to describe the coronavirus. Like so many others, our healthcare providers, whether they are Asian American or African American, or members of other minority groups, are subjected to racism, simply in the course of doing their jobs.

Racism is inexcusable always, but imagine how much worse it must have felt this past year, risking your life every single day to help a nation in the midst of a deadly pandemic, only to be subjected to racial slurs, offensive stereotypes, and vile actions. If this past year has taught us anything, it is that our Nation still has a long way to go on issues of race and immigration.

Consider this: One in six healthcare and social service workers are immigrants. Yet our broken immigration laws prevent many immigrants from contributing more fully to the battle against the pandemic.